

BOARD POLICY	
SUBJECT	Vehicle Usage
POLICY NUMBER	BP94-11
ORIGINAL EFFECTIVE DATE	October 20, 1994
REVISION DATE	September 22, 1999
HISTORICAL REFERENCE	R89-301; R94-200; R97-165; R99-171

Purpose: To provide general guidelines for the operation of County vehicles. This policy shall apply to all users of County vehicles unless otherwise provided by the Board of Supervisors.

Exceptions may occur, and these will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the Department Director, Constitutional Officer, or Agency Head directly through the County Administrator's office.

Procedure:

1. Authorized and Unauthorized Use. The following examples are for general guidance only and should not be considered as an attempt to cover all circumstances or conditions of use:

- a. Authorized Use:

- (1) County vehicles are authorized "For Official Use Only." Such vehicles are to be utilized to perform the functions and conduct the operations and programs of the Department or Agency which is using the vehicle. When such official use includes the transport of non-employees, such transport is approved. County vehicles may be utilized both within and outside of the County for official use. Anyone may be reimbursed for the use of their private vehicle when such vehicle is used in the conduct of County business; such reimbursement shall be made in compliance with the general policies of the County.
- (2) County vehicles may be taken home overnight by personnel on call to provide emergency services or official business. All authorizations in excess of a one-week authorization shall be in writing and approved by the County Administrator.

Authorization to use a County vehicle for transportation to and from an employee's residence for a period in excess of one week will be considered upon receipt of a written request signed by the employee's Department Director/Agency Head. A written request must include the name and title of each employee for whom authorization is requested; the frequency that the vehicle will be used for transportation to and from work; location of employee's home; and a narrative providing justification for the request. Requests for employees residing outside of the County of York will be considered. However, authorization will not be granted to an employee residing beyond a 25-mile radius of Yorktown. This distance limitation shall also apply to authorizations granted for periods of less than one week.

- (3) County vehicles shall be operated only by properly licensed County employees. Properly licensed volunteer workers may operate County vehicles while acting within the scope of their duties with the prior approval of the County Administrator. Such authorization shall be requested by the appropriate Department Director, Agency Head, or Constitutional Officer through the Human Resources Manager with by-name approval on file prior to allowing a volunteer driver to operate a County vehicle. Volunteer members of the Department of Fire and Life Safety are exempt from this reporting and authorization requirement provided they meet the driving standards prescribed for County employees and also have received the requisite training as prescribed by the Department of Fire and Life Safety and/or State law. The Fire Chief is authorized to allow the occasional use of County emergency services vehicles ~~during training or for operational necessity~~ by fully qualified emergency

services personnel employed by other governmental agencies during training, when conducting work in cooperation with another jurisdiction/agency or for other operational necessities. County vehicles may be operated on a temporary basis by properly licensed employees of other jurisdictions or agencies during servicing or repair of the jurisdiction/agency vehicles when such servicing arrangements are covered by a formal contract or memorandum of agreement between such jurisdiction/agency and the County.

b. Unauthorized Use:

- (1) County employees may not operate a County-owned or County-insured vehicle without having a valid, properly classified operator's or commercial driver's license as set out in paragraph 8.
- (2) County vehicles may not be utilized for personal purposes or for transportation to meals, except when employees in the conduct of County business are away from their normal place of work at meal time, they may use a County vehicle to go to a restaurant in their immediate vicinity. Additionally, personnel authorized overnight use of a County vehicle may use such vehicle for transportation to meals or for personal purposes, including the transporting of non-employees, when traveling in a direct route to or from work.
- (3) County vehicles may not be utilized to transport "hitchhikers." However, it is permissible to render assistance in case of accidents or other emergencies and to transport non-employees in such cases.
- (4) County vehicles shall not be used without the use of seat belts (if the vehicle is provided with seat belts).
- (5) It is absolutely prohibited for County-owned or County-insured vehicles to be utilized if the operator is impaired by, or under the influence of, alcohol, intoxicants, or drugs. The possession or consumption of alcohol, intoxicants, or illegal drugs while using County vehicles for transportation is also prohibited.
- (6) County vehicles may not be used to pull or push any other vehicle (public or private) without prior consent of the Department of General Services.
- (7) County vehicles are not to be driven in violation of the motor vehicle laws of Virginia. All citations are to be reported immediately to a supervisor.

2. Law Enforcement Personnel: The provisions of Section 1 of this Policy as it pertains to County-owned vehicles provided to the Sheriff's Office are modified as follows:

- a. The Sheriff may authorize a County-provided car to be kept at an officer's residence when off-duty provided the residence is located in York County. A list of vehicles so authorized shall be provided the County Administrator at the beginning of the fiscal year and as changes occur. Sheriff's Office vehicles which are authorized to be kept at a residence may be used for off-duty personal errands only if necessary and if no personal vehicle is available for use. Cars may be used to transport stranded motorists, other law enforcement personnel, and prisoners. While off duty no other passengers, including family members, shall be transported except in (1) an emergency, (2) when on official County business, or (3) when in direct route to or from work.
- b. Sheriff's Office vehicles which are authorized by the Sheriff to be kept at a residence may only be operated off-duty if the officer is (1) armed with a properly assigned, qualified firearm, (2) carrying Sheriff's Office identification credentials, (3) operating the vehicle only within the jurisdictional boundaries of York County or in transit from the lower end of the County to the Bruton District.
- c. The Sheriff has established a written "hot pursuit" policy, which has been reviewed and approved by the County Attorney, addressing safety considerations and special conditions under which County vehicles may be operated in emergency situations. Any amendments to this policy shall also be reviewed and approved by the County Attorney.

3. Care and Maintenance of Vehicles.

- a. Operator Responsibilities. Operators of County-supplied vehicles shall be responsible for checking and maintaining correct engine oil level; proper level of coolant in the radiator; ensuring proper operation of headlights, taillights and turn signals; tire pressure (including spare) and tire condition; proper braking action; and general appearance of the vehicle (interior and exterior). If a noted deficiency is not within an operator's ability to correct, the vehicle will be taken in for service promptly. Vehicles submitted to the County Garage for routine maintenance shall have excessive caked dirt removed in order to facilitate such service. Vehicles which are being turned in for disposal, exchanged or transferred through the County Garage shall be cleaned beforehand. Litter and personal effects shall be removed. Operators of vehicles which routinely travel off maintained highways shall clean the exterior of the vehicle of mud or caked-on dirt at least weekly. The Department of General Services shall make cleaning facilities at the County Garage available for all vehicle operators to use during normal working hours.
- b. Routine Maintenance. Each County vehicle shall be taken to the County Garage for preventive maintenance on a schedule promulgated by the Department of General Services. It shall be the responsibility of the appropriate Department Director/Agency Head to ensure that all assigned vehicles are taken to the County Garage for the preventive maintenance scheduled by the Department of General Services. Routine maintenance priorities will be established by the Department of General Services.
- c. Vehicle Alterations. Employees shall not alter or add any equipment to a County vehicle (including AM/FM radios, air conditioners, bumper stickers, racks, tool boxes, etc.) without written prior approval of the Department of General Services. Damages resulting from unauthorized modifications may be assessed against the person(s) making such modification. Required modifications may be completed by the County Garage or contracted alterations authorized by the Fleet Manager. Generally accepted modifications/alterations for designated law enforcement and public safety vehicles, such as the addition of protective interior wire or glass screens, emergency packages (lights, sirens), and two-way radios are authorized. Such modifications/alterations will first be coordinated and approved by the Fleet Manager to ensure that modifications will not adversely affect electrical or charging systems nor the overall safe operation of the vehicle.

4. Emergency Repairs.

- a. Regular Workday. When a vehicle becomes inoperable in the local area, the driver, after seeing that the vehicle is removed from the roadway, is to contact the County Garage for assistance. Normally, a maintenance mechanic will be dispatched to assess the problem, make repairs, or coordinate towing to the County Garage. When a vehicle becomes inoperable out of the local area, the driver may arrange, as necessary, for local towing service to the nearest competent repair facility. Prior to making any commitment for repairs, the driver shall obtain an estimate for such repairs and contact the County Garage for guidance.
- b. Nonwork-Hours/Work-Day. In the event that a breakdown occurs within a 25-mile radius of Yorktown and outside of normal working hours, the driver shall contact the York County 911 dispatcher (890-3621). The dispatcher shall obtain the phone number where the driver can be reached and then contact the on-call mechanic to coordinate repairs. If a breakdown occurs beyond the 25-mile radius, the driver is authorized to contact the nearest service facility, which has towing capability, and have the vehicle towed to the County Garage or to a service facility, whichever is more practical. The driver shall then determine the nature of the problem or cost for repairs. If the vehicle can be repaired for \$250 or less and it is not feasible to delay repairs until the County Garage can be contacted during normal working hours for guidance, the driver is authorized to have repairs accomplished. If repair estimates are in excess of \$250, the vehicle should be secured at the service facility until repairs can be coordinated with the County Garage. Alternative transportation (i.e., rental cars, taxi) should be utilized until repairs are made or another County vehicle is provided.

5. Vehicle Security. Security of a County vehicle is the operator's responsibility. Unattended County vehicles will be locked at all times. Operators may be responsible for loss of County property from an unsecured County vehicle.
6. Smoking. Smoking is not permitted in County vehicles.
7. Accidents:
 - a. Driving Practices. Operators should practice "defensive driving" and anticipate and observe the actions of other drivers and control their own vehicle in such a manner so as to avoid an accident involvement. An operator of a County vehicle and all passengers therein shall properly use seat belts. Injury resulting from failure to wear seat belts may constitute gross negligence on the part of the individual and upon case review may jeopardize an employee's eligibility for relief normally provided under Worker's Compensation and disability claims.
 - b. Accident Involving County Vehicle. In the event an accident should occur involving a County-owned or County-insured vehicle, the following procedures should be followed:
 - (1) Call for an ambulance for anyone seriously injured. (Dial 911 in most areas.) When calling from a cellular/pcs phone the caller should remain on the line and provide their exact location.
 - (2) Notify the police/fire department of the accident as circumstances dictate. The driver is required to immediately give notice of the accident by the quickest means of communication to a State trooper, sheriff, or other police official if the accident resulted in injury to or death of any person.
 - (3) Get the names, phone numbers, and addresses of all persons in the other vehicle(s), the driver's license data of other operators, the license number of other vehicle(s) and the name of the insurance carrier for other vehicle(s) involved.
 - (4) Complete the data on the accident report form located in the glove compartment of the vehicle and submit this form to the Department of Financial and Management Services within 24 hours. A copy of this form shall also be sent to the Department of General Services.
 - (5) DO NOT ADMIT RESPONSIBILITY and make no statement regarding the accident except to authorized insurance claims representatives of the County's insurance carrier and the police.
 - (6) DO NOT DISCLOSE INSURANCE policy details to anyone. However, you may inform the other driver of the name of the County's insurance carrier and policy number.
 - (7) If there are no injuries involved in the accident, the driver may still be required to file a report with the Division of Motor Vehicles as to the extent of the property damage involved. The driver is responsible for contacting the Division of Motor Vehicles within 5 days of the accident to determine if a report will be required.
 - c. Rendering Assistance. Upon reaching the scene of an accident, the operator of a County vehicle is authorized to render such assistance as he can by caring for the injured first, calling or sending for the fire, rescue, or police and taking measures to prevent other vehicles from becoming involved in the accident. When stopping at the scene of an accident, the driver should ensure that the vehicle is parked in a safe location so as not to interfere with traffic.
 - d. Accident Reporting. A County Vehicle Accident Report form is required and shall be completed by the operator or assigned driver of a County-insured vehicle involved in an accident when:
 - an injury occurs, regardless of property damage;
 - an accident or collision involves a vehicle or property not owned by the County regardless of fault or damage sustained by either party;

- another County-owned vehicle or item of property is involved and the probable cost of total repairs (vehicle and or property) will exceed \$100 as determined by the County's Fleet Manager;

- mysterious or unexplained damage to a County vehicle is clearly visible and the probable cost of total repairs will exceed \$100 as determined by the County's Fleet Manager.

The accident report shall be reviewed by the Division Chief or other supervisor who shall forward copies of the report to the Department of Financial and Management Services and the Fleet Manager prior to the close of the next County work day after the accident. The vehicle accident reporting process is further described in Attachment D.

- e. Case Review. A copy of the Vehicle Accident Report shall be provided to the County Administrator and the Chair of the Loss Control Management Committee (LCMC) by the Department of Financial and Management Services within three working days. The County Fleet Manager shall conduct an investigation of the facts and circumstances of accidents involving County-owned vehicles which have resulted in a reported injury or when property damage in excess of \$500 is involved. The Fleet Manager is authorized to gather evidence, relevant documents and solicit written statements from County employees. Within ten (10) working days from receipt of the accident report, the Fleet Manager shall forward to the Chair of the LCMC the results of his inquiry (Part I Accident Inquiry form, Attachment C). If additional reports concerning the accident are expected from outside agencies, i.e., State Police, non-County employees involved in the accident, etc., then the report shall be provided within ten (10) working days from receipt of all such anticipated information. If delays are anticipated, the Fleet Manager shall notify the Chair of the LCMC as soon as possible. The LCMC shall review Part I of the Accident Inquiry form as soon as practicable and render an opinion as to whether negligence or operating practices were a probable contributing factor to the accident. The LCMC may also recommend changes to safety policies or procedures to the County Administrator (Part II of the Accident Inquiry form). The Human Resources Manager shall communicate the results of the review to the employee's Department Director who will, after consultation with the Human Resources Manager, determine the appropriate corrective action. Corrective action may be administrative in nature, such as additional driver training or may include disciplinary measures. The County Administrator shall review the report, determine the appropriate disposition of the case, and conclude the Inquiry process (Part III of the Accident Inquiry form). Accident reporting and inquiry procedures are outlined on Attachment D.
- f. Failure to Report Vehicular Accident Damage. Using the Accident Inquiry form, the Fleet Manager shall notify the LCMC if a vehicle Accident Report has not been submitted when required or upon discovery of previously unreported damage to a County vehicle.

8. Driver Qualifications and Training:

- a. Licensing. Department Directors/Agency Heads are responsible for ensuring that their employees are properly licensed and trained to operate County vehicles. A valid Virginia driver's license is required to operate County vehicles. The basic license requirements for passenger vehicles apply, with the following additional requirements for heavy vehicles operated on the highway:

Those persons required to operate or maintain a vehicle weighing 26,001 pounds or more, gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR); or designed to carry 16 or more passengers, including the driver; or used to transport hazardous materials required to be placarded by federal law, must have a Virginia Commercial Motor Driver's License (CDL). Such license is required for volunteer drivers, heavy vehicle mechanics, and public school bus operators. Commercial license requirements do not apply to operators of emergency vehicles, such as fire fighters. However, operators of emergency vehicles must meet special State and Federal skill requirements for driving certification.

9. Driving Records.

- a. A valid Virginia driver's license for the appropriate class of vehicle or equipment which will be operated is required if such vehicle or equipment operation is specifically required in the job

description. Prospective employees and volunteers who will be required to operate a County vehicle during the course of their employment shall secure a copy of a current (less than 30 days old) DMV driving record at the employee's or volunteer's own expense and shall provide it to the hiring supervisor who will forward it to the Human Resources Manager in conjunction with the request for an employment offer to be made.

- b. A Virginia driver's license for current and prospective employees and volunteers may not have DMV restriction codes which limit the driving privilege to the extent that requirements of the jobs applied for or occupied cannot be met. If the individual will be required to operate a bus capable of carrying more than 15 passengers, then the license must have the coded endorsement of "S."
 - c. The Director of Financial and Management Services shall maintain a program to obtain the DMV records for operators of County vehicles. The DMV record shall be maintained in confidential, individual personnel files and updated annually. DMV driving records for County employees may be obtained from the Division of Motor Vehicles by the Human Resources Office at no expense to the County or individual concerned. The Human Resources Manager shall notify the appropriate Department Director/Agency Head and County Administrator when an employee's or volunteer's record does not meet the minimum standards described in Sections 9(b) or 10.
10. Driving Standards. All current and prospective York County employees or volunteers who are required to operate a County-owned vehicle according to their job description shall be required to submit to a Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) record check. All other employees and volunteers who may occasionally drive a County vehicle must also submit to a DMV records check prior to vehicle operation. For current employees and volunteers this check will occur, at a minimum, on an annual basis. Drivers must meet minimum standards as determined by the County. In addition to the annual DMV records check, all current employees and volunteers must inform their supervisor, by the next scheduled workday, of any licenses suspensions, or revocations, or charges being placed for any of the offenses listed in subparagraph (iii) below, and the final disposition of the case. Failure to do so may be grounds for immediate dismissal. Drivers must meet minimum standards as determined by the County. York County's standards are as follows:
- (i) No more than two (2) moving violations within the previous twelve (12) months.
 - (ii) No more than three (3) moving violations within the previous twenty-four (24) months.
 - (iii) No record of convictions associated with driving under the influence (DUI), reckless driving, eluding police, leaving the scene of an accident, or manslaughter (voluntary or involuntary) within the previous sixty (60) months.
 - (iv) No record of current revocations or suspensions or previous revocations or suspensions associated with moving violations within the last sixty (60) months.

If an employee or volunteer fails to meet driving standards and is in a position where operating a vehicle is essential to the County, appropriate action will be taken depending on the severity and number of the conviction(s). At the recommendation of the Department Director/Agency Head, appropriate action may range from putting the employee or volunteer on a "watch status," with DMV checks conducted on a more frequent basis, to termination of employment or termination of voluntary assignment with the County.

This procedure does not prohibit Department Directors from issuing reasonable standard operating procedures with more stringent requirements.

11. Driver Training. Operators of County vehicles shall be required to participate in the County's Defensive Driving Program administered by the Department of Financial and Management Services.
- a. A Defensive Driver Education Program shall be established by the County Administrator. Department Directors, Agency Heads, and Constitutional Officers whose employees operate County-provided vehicles shall support the program by ensuring that employees participate in Defensive Driving classes when scheduled and as otherwise required.

- b. New employees will be scheduled by F&MS for a Defensive Driving class as soon as possible.
- c. Certain Fire and Life Safety employees may be required to complete alternative programs.

12. Miscellaneous

- a. Monitoring Vehicle Use. Department Directors/Agency Heads shall carefully monitor and take necessary action to preclude operations that are contrary to the policies and procedures herein.
- b. Grievance. Any Department or Agency aggrieved by a decision of the Director of General Services shall immediately set up a conference between the County Administrator, Director of General Services, and the aggrieved party to resolve the matter.
- c. Citizen/Complaints. Complaints regarding the use or operation of County vehicles shall be directed to Department of General Services. The Department of General Services shall complete a Complaint Form (Attachment B) for each complaint and forward a copy of said Complaint Form to the appropriate Department Director/Agency Head and the County Administrator. Upon receipt, the appropriate Department Director/Agency Head shall investigate the complaint and report to the County Administrator the results of the investigation and any corrective action taken regarding the complaint.
- d. Approved Departmental Rules. Any departmental rules, regulations, or procedures approved by the County Administrator governing the use or operation of County-owned or County-insured vehicles, which are not in conflict with this policy, shall be considered a part of this policy and shall be enforced as such.
- e. Action to be Taken. Violations of this policy will be reviewed by the County Administrator's Office, and may result in loss of County driving privilege or loss of Department's vehicle allocation.
- f. Supervisory Responsibilities. Department Directors, Agency Heads, and Constitutional Officers shall ensure that before their employees are permitted to operate a County vehicle, drivers are properly trained in its use; in procedures to be followed should they be involved in an accident with a County vehicle; in the procedures for refueling vehicles with the automated card system; in basic maintenance responsibilities of the operator (checking tires, oil level, lights, etc.) and in preventive maintenance services performed by the County garage. In addition, each authorized driver whether a full-time County employee or volunteer worker, will be fully briefed on County and departmental personnel policies pertaining to operator negligence and damage to County property.
- g. Reimbursement for Use of Personal Vehicles. From time-to-time it may be necessary for employees to use personal vehicles for official County business. Personal vehicles should only be used with the approval of the employee's supervisor. Any miles driven will be reimbursed at a rate equal to the latest per mile amount established by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Attachment A - Vehicle Accident Report Form
Attachment B - Complaint Form
Attachment C - Accident Inquiry Form
Attachment D - Accident Reporting and Inquiry Process